Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

4 May 2004

Original: English

Third session
New York, 26 April-7 May 2004

Implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and paragraphs 3 and 4 (c) of the 1995 decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament

Report submitted by Ireland

States Parties agreed in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons that there should be regular reports, within the framework of the NPT strengthened review process by all States Parties on the implementation of Article VI and paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 Decision on 'Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament.'

Ireland hereby submits its report to the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

During the second session of the Preparatory Committee, Ireland participated actively as a member of the European Union and of the New Agenda Coalition.

In 2003, Ireland co-sponsored GA Resolution 58/51 (Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda) and GA Resolution 58/50 (Reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons).

Implementation of the 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI of the NPT and paragraphs 3 and 4 (c) of the 1995 Decision on 'Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament' included in the Final Document adopted by consensus at the 200 Review Conference:

STEP 1

The importance and urgency of signatures and ratifications, without delay and without conditions and in accordance with constitutional processes, to achieve the early entry onto force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Ireland ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in July 1999 and has advocated the urgent need for its entry into force without delay and without conditions. Ireland has worked in support of this aim within the European Union and the New Agenda Coalition. In 2003, the EU made a number of demarches to promote the universalisation of the CTBT. The EU also adopted a Common Position 2003/805/CFSP of 17 November 2003

04-34327 (E) 180504

on the universalisation and reinforcement of multilateral agreements in the field of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and means of delivery, in which, inter alia, the EU expressed the objective of promoting the early entry into force of the CTBT. Ireland continues to see the CTBT as one of the fundamental steps on the road to nuclear disarmament.

STEP 2

A moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosion pending entry into force of that Treaty.

Ireland, along with our EU partners, has urged all States to abide by a moratorium and to refrain from any actions which are contrary to the obligations and provisions of the CTBT. The Joint Ministerial Statement and the New Agenda omnibus Resolution at UNGA 58 both reaffirm the importance of the maintenance of moratoria pending entry into force of the CTBT. The New Agenda Resolution 58/51 called for the upholding and maintenance of the moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions pending entry into force of the CTBT

STEP 3

The necessity of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a non-discriminatory multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in accordance with the statement of the Special Coordinator in 1995 and the mandate contained therein, taking into consideration both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives. The Conference on Disarmament is urged to agree on a programme of work, which includes the immediate commencement of negotiations on such a treaty with a view to conclusion within five years.

Ireland has been a member of the Conference on Disarmament since 1999 and has actively supported efforts to break the deadlock on the work programme. Ireland supports the efforts of the Five Ambassadors to build upon the initial Amorim proposal. We maintain the view that the CD should begin negotiations on a Treaty dealing with fissile material. We also see merit in embarking on a process that could eventually lead to an agreement on the non-weaponisation of outer space.

In March 2004, Ireland's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Brian Cowen, delivered a statement to the Conference on Disarmament, which, inter alia, urged efforts to build consensus and suggested that "it should be possible to find agreement which will reflect common concerns" and that "structured discussions on each item of the agenda of the conference could build understanding of complex issues and appreciation of each other's concerns." Ireland welcomes the recent decision by the CD to undertake such discussions and looks forward to fruitful exchanges in the meetings scheduled for May and June 2004.

STEP 4

The necessity of establishing in the Conference on Disarmament an appropriate subsidiary body with a mandate to deal with nuclear disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament is urged to agree on a programme of work which includes the immediate establishment of such a body.

As emphasised by Ireland's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Brian Cowen, in his statement to the Conference on Disarmament last March, Ireland continues to favour the early establishment of a subsidiary body to deal specifically with the issue of nuclear disarmament.

STEP 5

The principle of irreversibility to apply to nuclear disarmament, nuclear and other related arms control and reduction measures.

The principle of irreversibility is a fundamental one which must be applied to all disarmament and arms control measures (regardless of whether they are unilateral, bilateral or multilateral). Ireland considers that the application of this principle is the only guarantee against the possibility of redeployment.

STEP 6

An unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament to which all States Parties are committed under Article VI.

Ireland as a member of the New Agenda Coalition continues to press for verifiable progress under this step. The fulfillment, by the nuclear weapon states, of this unequivocal undertaking is a basic necessity for the achievement of a nuclear weapon-free world.

STEP 7

The early entry into force and full implementation of START II and the conclusion of START III as soon as possible while preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability and as a basis for further reductions of strategic offensive weapons, in accordance with its provisions.

Developments since 2000 (the US abrogation of the ABM and the demise of START I and START III) have not removed the need for a basis for further reductions of strategic offensive weapons. Ireland has noted the conclusion of the Moscow Treaty between the US and the Russian Federation on strategic offensive reductions until 2012. It is an important step in the context of international security and a contribution to the efforts of the international community in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. However, as we have emphasised, through the New Agenda Coalition, measures should be transparent, verifiable and irreversible and should also address non-operational warheads, thus making it an effective nuclear disarmament measure.

STEP 8

The completion and implementation of the Trilateral Initiative between the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Ireland continues to support this initiative. We note the successful completion in September 2002 of the first phase of the Trilateral Initiative, which aims to enable the placement of excess nuclear materials from dismantled weapons under international safeguards.

STEP 9

Steps by all the nuclear-weapon states leading to nuclear disarmament in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all:

- ***Further efforts by the nuclear-weapon states to reduce their nuclear arsenals unilaterally.***

- ***Increased transparency by the nuclear-weapon states with regard to their nuclear weapons capabilities and the implementation of agreements pursuant to Article VI and as a voluntary confidence-building measure to support further progress on nuclear disarmament.***

- ***The further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives and as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process.***

- ***Concrete agreed measures to further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems.***

- ***A diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies to minimise the risk that these weapons ever be used and to facilitate the process of their total elimination.***

- ***The engagement as soon as appropriate of all the nuclear-weapon states in the process leading to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons.***

As a non-nuclear weapon State, Ireland can only press for progress on the implementation of these steps. We note in particular the importance of the principle of transparency contained in this step. Together with the principles of irreversibility and verification, this should apply to all disarmament and arms control efforts.

Work has been ongoing in particular in the area of reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons. Ireland continues to support this initiative and reiterates the call made by the New Agenda Coalition in Resolution 58/50 at the United Nations General Assembly.

STEP 10

Arrangements by all nuclear-weapon states to place, as soon as practicable, fissile material designated by each of them as no longer required for military purposes under IAEA or other relevant international verification and arrangements for the disposition of such material for peaceful purposes, to ensure that such material remains permanently outside of military programmes.

Ireland calls on nuclear weapon States, which have not yet done so, to make such arrangements.

STEP 11

Reaffirmation that the ultimate objective of the efforts of States in the disarmament process is general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

Ireland works actively in a number of disarmament fora and is a State Party to, inter alia, the NPT, CWC, BTWC, CTBT, CCW, and Ottawa Convention. Speaking about WMD in his statement to the Conference on Disarmament, Ireland's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Brian Cowen, emphasised that the potential of WMD to "destroy our world demands more effective and urgent action towards their elimination. The international community must strengthen their efforts to prevent their further proliferation and the danger that these weapons could fall into the hands of terrorists." Ireland is also active in working within the European Union to strengthen the Union's policy on the non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Ireland also participates in a number of export control fora, namely the Australia Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, Nuclear Suppliers Group, Wassenaar Arrangement and Zangger Committee. Ireland sees effective export control as a necessary complement to multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control efforts.

STEP 12

Regular reports, within the framework of the NPT strengthened review process, by all States parties on the implementation of Article VI and paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 Decision on 'Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament', and recalling the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996.

Ireland considers regular reporting to be a key element of the 13 steps and presented a report to the last Preparatory Committee. Ireland views reporting, not as an end in itself, but as an important tool in strengthening the NPT process, through greater transparency.

STEP 13

The further development of the verification capabilities that will be required to provide assurance of compliance with nuclear disarmament agreements for the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The 2000 Review Conference endorsed the measures of the Model Additional Protocol approved by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Ireland supports the IAEA in its verification tasks and strongly favours a system of strengthened IAEA Safeguards. Ireland, together with all other EU Member States, has completed its ratification procedures with respect to an Additional Protocol with the IAEA. We would urge all States, regardless of the size or nature of their nuclear programme, which have not yet signed an Additional Protocol to do so.